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VISVESVARAYA IRON AND STEEL LIMITED TO CLOSE, SAYS MINISTER IN RAJYA SABHA

Shivamogga: Union Minister for Steel Jyotiraditya Scindia on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Limited (VISL) in Bhadravathi will be closed due to non-availability of a captive iron ore mine. He said the other factors are high cost and low volume of production due to obsolete technology and competitive alloy steel market
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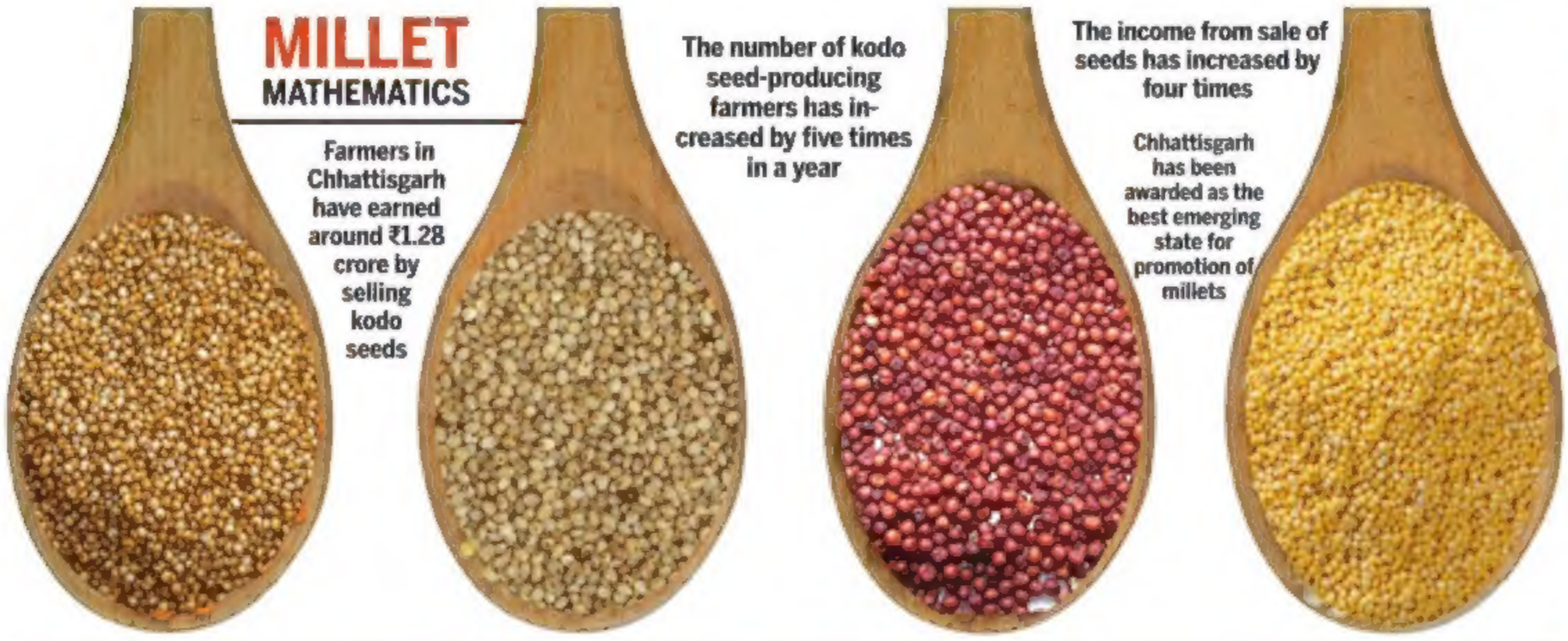
CHHATTISGARH
ON THE FRONTLINES OF CHANGE

Millet Multiplier

Chhattisgarh's innovative Millet Mission has boosted the cultivation of coarse grains and provided farmers with sustainable livelihoods.


MILLET
MATHEMATICS
Farmers in Chhattisgarh have earned around ₹1.28 crore by selling kodo seeds
The number of kodo seed-producing farmers has increased by five times in a year
The income from sale of seeds has increased by four times
Chhattisgarh has been awarded as the best emerging state for promotion of millets

CAFE COOL

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised Raigarh's Millet Cafe
- **In just nine months, Raigarh's Millet Cafe has gained popularity at the national level**
- Dishes such as cheela, idli, dosa, momos, and pizzas made of ragi and kodo biryani are served in this cafe
- **Chhattisgarh is emerging as a millet hub under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel**
- The Millet Mission has boosted the production of coarse grains

The Millet Movement

The Chhattisgarh Millet Mission has given a major boost to the cultivation of kodo, kutki and ragi (millets) in the state and has made it profitable for farmers to grow millet crops. On the special initiative of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, millets are being procured at support prices and this has helped farmers to earn crores of rupees. In the last season, farmers had sold 34,296 quintals of millets at the support price for Rs 10.45 crore.

Chhattisgarh is the only state in the country where kodo, kutki and ragi are being procured at the support price and the work of its value addition is also being done. Kodo-kutki is being procured at the rate of Rs 3,000 per quintal on the support price and ragi is being procured at the rate of Rs 3,377 per quintal.

With the support and guidance of the Chhattisgarh State Seed Certification Institute, farmers have started producing certified kodo seeds and are earning substantial profits. In the last one year, the number of farmers producing certified seeds has increased by almost five times and the income from this has increased four times. In the year 2021-22, 3,089 quintals of certified seeds were produced by 171 farmers of 11 districts of the state. These seeds were procured by the Seed Corporation at the rate of Rs 4,150 per quintal, against which an amount of more than Rs 1,28,18,000 was paid to the farmers. The certified seeds produced by the farmers of the state are being supplied for sowing through cooperative societies.

A.B. Asana, Additional Director of Seed Certification Institute, said that in the year 2020-21, only 716 quintals of certified seeds were produced by 36 farmers of seven districts in the state, and their income that year was a mere Rs 32.88 lakh, whereas in 2021-22 the number of kodo seed producing farmers and the profit from the sale of seeds both increased manifold. In the last three years, kodo certified seed producing farmers have sold seeds worth Rs 1,65,18,633 to the Chhattisgarh Seed Development Corporation.

Asana said that cultivation of kodo is more beneficial in the agricultural land where the production of paddy is nominal. Kodo cultivation requires less water and less fertilizer, and so it has low input cost and high profit for the farmers. He said that in the year 2019-20, only 103 quintals of certified seeds were produced in the state. Since the implementation of the Millet Mission, the Chhattisgarh State Seed Certification Institute, in coordination with other government institutions, is making continuous efforts to promote kodo seed production and these efforts are bearing significantly positive results.

No surprise then that Chhattisgarh has received the National Level Nutritious Grain Award 2022 for promoting millet farming. To further promote millet production in the state, the state government has included millet farming under the scope of the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana. Millet producing farmers are being provided an exchange grant of Rs 9,000 per acre as an incentive.

The cultivation of kodo, kutki and ragi is being continuously expanded in the state. The area under millet cultivation has increased from 69,000 hectare to 1,88,000 hectare in the state. The Millet Mission is being implemented with the objective of promoting millet cultivation, training of farmers, availability of high quality seeds and increase in productivity. Under the Chhattisgarh Millet Mission, a target has also been set to increase the productivity of millet from 4.5 quintals per acre to 9 quintals.

MoU with IIMR aims to double the productivity

Cultivation of kodo, kutki and ragi is being expanded in the state. The area under its cultivation has increased from 69,000 hectares to 1.88 lakh hectares in the state. The Millet Mission is being run in the state with the goal of promoting millet cultivation, training farmers, ensuring the availability of high-quality seeds, and increasing productivity. Fourteen districts have signed a tripartite MoU with IIMR Hyderabad under the Millet Mission through the efforts of the Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Association. Under the Chhattisgarh Millet Mission, a target has also been set to increase the productivity of millet from 4.5 quintals per acre to 9 quintals--that is doubling the productivity.

Kodo, kutki, ragi procured at support price in Chhattisgarh

Chhattisgarh is the first state in the country where millets are being promoted consistently under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. In Chhattisgarh, not only has the support price of kodo, kutki and ragi been declared, but it is also being procured at the support price. With this initiative, the area under millets in Chhattisgarh has increased one and a half times and production has also increased. The Chief Minister had organised lunch for the members of the legislative assembly and the media to promote dishes made from millet. The Millet Cafe has also started in Chhattisgarh. The biggest processing plant of millets has also been set up at Nathia-Navagaon in Kanker district. To promote millets, millet processing plants are being set up in rural industrial parks (RIPA) at Gauthan.

Balancing nutrition and taste

The Millet Cafe near Natwar School in Raigarh is a unique cafe that serves delectable dishes made from millets like ragi, kodo, kutki, combining nutrition with taste. This cafe has the distinction of being the first millet cafe in the state that is operated by women. And it is a matter of pride for the state that Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised this millet cafe and Chhattisgarh Government's initiative to promote millet in his radio programme, Mann Ki Baat. He asked the listeners that whenever they get a chance to visit Raigarh in Chhattisgarh, they should visit the Millet Cafe and enjoy the cuisine there. Pasta, cheela, idli, Manchurian, momos, pizzas, noodles, dosa made from ragi, and biryani made from kodo can be tasted in this cafe.

The year 2023 is being celebrated as the International Millet Year to encourage production and consumption of millets.

Mission Millet was launched in Chhattisgarh Under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, to boost the production of coarse grains and minor grain crops like ragi, kodo, kutki, to ensure good arrangements for the procurement of these millet crops and to take these to the urban markets after processing. Besides fixing the support price of kodo, kutki and ragi, the state government has also included them in the purview of the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana. Fourteen districts of the state have been included under this mission. For this, an MoU has been signed with the Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR), Hyderabad. Under the MoU, the IIMR Hyderabad, is providing cooperation and guidance for increasing the productivity of kodo, kutki and ragi in Chhattisgarh, besides ensuring technical know-how, availability of high quality seeds and establishment of a seed bank.